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Article sheds light on support for public health

Looking for a quick read during the Thanksgiving break? I recently came across a very interesting article in the Health Affairs journal. Titled Americans' Conflicting Views About The Public Health System, And How To Shore Up Support, the short yet compact article provides some interesting insights into the complex and nuanced views Americans have about our nation's public health system.

Among the findings, the authors' research shows that there is broad-based support for increased public health funding. In fact, the number of people who think more resources should be dedicated to public health are proportionally larger than those who think the U.S. is spending too little in other major areas, such as the environment, Social Security, national defense, and foreign aid. In addition, the report found that the majority of Americans see long-term cost savings from public health spending.

On the more negative side, the report shows that Americans do not believe the nation's public health system as a whole is working very well. In addition, respondents do not see the health of their state's residents as having improved over the past five years.

As the public's impressions of public health and our health care system in general continue to evolve and shift over time, it is important that we stay current on this type of research. Doing so makes us more flexible and helps us communicate more effectively with all of our audiences, so that the work of promoting and protecting the health of Iowans can continue. To read the full article, visit http://content.healthaffairs.org/cgi/reprint/29/11/2033.

Rhoads recognizes "front-line" direct care workers

The Iowa CareGivers Association recently worked with Iowa State University football coach Paul Rhoads to create a series of public service announcements highlighting the importance of direct care workers. Rhoads compares them to his front line players whom he says "work in the trenches, making things happen," but who rarely get the credit they deserve. "It's what they do that makes our team successful," the coach says. Sponsored in part by the Iowa Department of Public Health, the TV spots are running on major broadcast television networks and on cable stations throughout Iowa. To view the ad, visit www.iowacaregivers.org.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

And thank you for everything you do to promote and protect the health of Iowans.

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To everyone in public health and all our partners, keep up the great work!

— Tom